

# Categorical Exclusion Documentation Format for Actions Other Than Hazardous Fuels and Fire Rehabilitation Actions

## Brown Shaft Backfill DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2011-003-CX

### A. Background

**BLM Office:** Hassayampa Field Office

**Lease/Serial/Case File No.:** N/A

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Brown Shaft Backfill

**Location of Proposed Action:** T. 13 N., R. 1 E., NW¼NW ¼ of section 15, G&SRM, Maricopa County, Arizona.

**Description of Proposed Action:** BLM would backfill a vertical ~450 ft. deep open abandoned mine shaft (Brown Shaft, aka AZ13N1E15001) on public land adjacent to a residential area near Dewey, AZ. Site surveyed and cleared for cultural resources by BLM Archaeologist Chris McLaughlin. Site was surveyed for wildlife by the Arizona Game & Fish Dept. (AZGFD) in the summer of 2010, who found that the shaft was not a significant wildlife habitat, and recommended that a wildlife exclusion (chicken wire) be installed over the shaft collar one week before backfilling the shaft. AZGFD installed the exclusion on October 11, 2010, and a BLM contractor is planning to backfill the shaft on October 18, 2010, using a dozer to push material from the waste rock dump next to the shaft into the hole. Backfilling the shaft would significantly improve public safety for the nearby residents, as the physical safety hazard would be permanently eliminated. The Brown Shaft is located at:

<u>AMSCM identifier</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>	<u>UTM coordinates (NAD 83)</u>
AZ13N1E15001	34.513472	-112.253204	12S 384967E 3819804N

### B. Land Use Plan Conformance

**Land Use Plan (LUP) Name:** Bradshaw-Harquahala Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan.

**Date Approved/Amended:** April 2010

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): N/A

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

The Bradshaw-Harquahala Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan, approved April 2010, states on page A-24, in Public Safety – Standard Operating Procedures – Abandoned Mine Lands: “Inspect abandoned mine land sites to identify all physical hazards presenting a safety risk to the public, and take appropriate action to mitigate any hazards and prevent public access to abandoned mine land contaminated areas.”

**C: Compliance with NEPA:**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, Appendix 4, J (8) – Installation of minor devices to protect human life, (e.g., grates across mines), and, Appendix 4, J (10) -- Removal of structures and materials of no historical value, such as abandoned automobiles, fences, and buildings, including those built in trespass and reclamation of the site when little or no surface disturbance is involved.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM2 apply.

I considered the following when reviewing the proposed project:

- The act of backfilling the open mine shaft will have a positive effect on public health & safety, particularly given that the site is located immediately adjacent to a residential area near Dewey, AZ.
- According to an LR2000 Mining Claim Geo Report run on October 14, 2010, there are no active mining claims onsite.
- A cultural clearance has been completed for the site. No historic features would be impacted by the proposed backfilling. Standard stipulations apply, along with the following special stipulation: “During backfilling work, the contractor will carefully avoid all historic features and structures. An environmental monitor shall ensure that the work is carried out away from all historic features.”
- No T&E habitat or species are present in this area, and there is no significant bat habitat in the shaft to be backfilled, according to wildlife surveys completed by biologists from BLM and the Arizona Game & Fish Dept. (AZGFD). A wildlife exclusion was installed on the shaft by AZGFD on October 11, 2010, to ensure that no bats, owls, or other wildlife remain in the shaft when it is backfilled.

**D: Signature**

Authorizing Official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10/18/2010  
(Signature)

Name: Steven Cohn

Title: Field Manager, Hassayampa Field Office

**Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Mining Engineer Matt Plis, Phoenix District Office, 21605 N. 7th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85027, 623-580-5500

**Note:** A separate decision document must be prepared for the action covered by the CX.

## Approval and Decision

**Compliance and assignment of responsibility:** Matt Plis, Environmental Engineer

**Monitoring and assignment of responsibility:** Roy Draper, Surface Protection Specialist

**Review:** We have determined that the proposal is in accordance with the categorical exclusion criteria and that it would not involve any significant environmental effects. Therefore, it is categorically excluded from further environmental review.

**Prepared by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** 10/14/2010

**Matt Plis**  
Environmental Engineer

**Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** 10/19/2010

**Leah Baker**  
Planning & Environmental Coordinator

**Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** 10/18/2010

**Steven Cohn**  
Field Manager

**Project Description:** BLM would backfill a vertical ~450 ft. deep open abandoned mine shaft (Brown Shaft, aka AZ13N1E15001) on public land adjacent to a residential area near Dewey, AZ. Site surveyed and cleared for cultural resources by BLM Archaeologist Chris McLaughlin. Site was surveyed for wildlife by the Arizona Game & Fish Dept. (AZGFD) in the summer of 2010, who found that the shaft was not a significant wildlife habitat, and recommended that a wildlife exclusion (chicken wire) be installed over the shaft collar one week before backfilling the shaft. AZGFD installed the exclusion on October 11, 2010, and a BLM contractor is planning to backfill the shaft on October 18, 2010, using a dozer to push material from the waste rock dump next to the shaft into the hole.

**Decision:** Based on a review of the project described above and field office staff recommendations, I have determined that the project is in conformance with the land use plan and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to approve the action as proposed, with the following stipulation: During backfilling work, the contractor will carefully avoid all historic features and structures. An environmental monitor shall ensure that the work is carried out away from all historic features.

**Approved By:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** 10/18/2010

**Steven Cohn**  
Field Manager